

**Question for written answer
to the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign
Affairs and Security Policy**

Rule 144

Per Clausen (The Left), Hanna Gedin (The Left), Jonas Sjöstedt (The Left)

Subject: The disappearance of German journalist Eva Maria Michelmann and Kurdish journalist Ahmed Polad in Raqqa, Syria - and the efforts of the EU.

Since the capture of the city of Raqqa by forces of the Syrian Transitional Government (STG), on 18 January 2026, two journalists have been missing¹- and it is feared that they have been forcefully "disappeared". The two disappeared are German journalist Eva Maria Michelmann (working for ETHA) and Kurdish journalist Ahmet Polad (working with outlets such as urdistana Azad and Özgür TV) - and eyewitnesses have reported them being put in a vehicle belonging to Syrian government forces².

The case of two journalists also highlights the issue with thousands of civilians who remain unaccounted for, or who have been arbitrarily detained, following the STG's January 2026 military operations in north-east Syria.

In connection with this, can the HR/VP kindly answer the following:

- 1 How - if at all - has EU-representatives raised this urgent matter with the Syrian Transitional Government?
- 2 What new actions does the EEAS intend to take in the case, to acquire information about the two journalists and ensure their release - and when will such action be taken?
- 3 What steps are the EEAS taking to ensure the safety of independent reporting from Syria, including by European journalists?

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¹ <https://cpj.org/2026/03/german-turkish-journalists-missing-in-syria/>

² <https://cpj.org/data/people/eva-maria-michelmann/>